

# LIPSCOMB REPORT

1<sup>ST</sup> DISTRICT

FALL/WINTER 2016



Chairman Lipscomb presides over the County Board's annual budget adoption meeting.

**THEODORE LIPSCOMB, SR.**  
Milwaukee County Board  
Chairman and  
1st District Supervisor

#### ADDRESS

901 N. 9th Street, RM 201  
Milwaukee, WI 53233

#### PHONE

(414) 278-4280

#### EMAIL

theodore.lipscomb@  
milwaukeecountywi.gov

#### APPOINTMENTS

Southeastern Wisconsin Regional  
Planning Commission

Wisconsin Counties Association  
Board of Directors

#### Dear Neighbors,

On October 3rd, when County Executive Chris Abele first released his 2017 Budget proposal, it was clear that we had a lot of work ahead of us. County Executive Abele built his proposed budget around a \$60 wheel tax and a 1.5 percent property tax levy increase, the first property tax increase proposed by a County Executive since 2002. Further, County Executive Abele's budget came to us unbalanced with an estimated \$2.5 million calculation error. This budget was one of the most challenging we have faced since I took office in 2008 – it started with a nearly \$37 million structural deficit.

Many constituents expressed their concerns with the Executive's budget proposals, especially the wheel tax. I am proud to say that the County Board reduced spending by more than \$14 million and passed a balanced budget that cut County Executive Abele's \$60 wheel tax in half, to \$30, and eased his property tax increase.

Despite these reductions, I was able to preserve important roadway projects in the 1st District. The reconstruction of Mill Road from North 43rd Street to North Sydney Place, and the design phase of reconstruction of North Teutonia Avenue from Good Hope Road to Bradley Road are budgeted for 2017. One of the few additions to the budget was an amendment I authored to start the phased reconstruction of the parkway road in Brown Deer Park, including rerouting it to accommodate an upgraded driving range.

It is a reality that our county and essential services, such as transit, need additional revenue to be sustainable and avoid crippling cuts. The State of Wisconsin prevents counties from increasing the gas tax or the sales tax beyond its current rate of 0.5 percent, and imposes limitations on the property tax levy. The wheel tax is the only new source of dedicated funding available. The State of Wisconsin continues a long trend of underfunding Milwaukee County while mandating that we provide various services on their behalf.

The reduced \$30 wheel tax helps establish a dedicated source of funding for Milwaukee County's transit system. The adopted budget also calls for legislative changes to allow a more progressive wheel tax such as one that considers the value and age of the vehicle. Current state law only allows a flat fee.

Ultimately, the County Board adopted a balanced budget that cuts spending but continues to fund vital services and cultural amenities for Milwaukee County residents, reduces by half Executive Abele's wheel tax, and maintains a responsible tax levy that is under the prevailing rate of inflation.

The chart in this newsletter highlights various proposals in the 2017 Budget, adopted amendments, and the role I played in shaping many of the changes. It remains an honor to represent you on the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors and serve as the County Board Chairman.

Sincerely,

Theodore Lipscomb, Sr., Chairman  
County Supervisor, 1st District

If you would like to receive periodic updates on County news and events in our community, sign up for my e-newsletter at [www.milwaukee.gov/Lipscomb](http://www.milwaukee.gov/Lipscomb)

**Theodore LIPSCOMB**

Milwaukee County Board Chairman & County Supervisor, 1st District



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901 N. 9th Street, RM 201  
Milwaukee, WI 53233-1425

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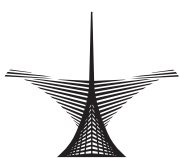
Chairman Lipscomb listens to feedback from residents at the Milwaukee County Annual Budget Public Hearing.

**Chairman Lipscomb invites you to enjoy FREE Milwaukee County attractions!**



Free to all the first Thursday of every month, sponsored by Kohl's. County residents get \$2 off every day.

800 W. Wells St., Milwaukee  
(414) 278-2728  
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MILWAUKEE ART MUSEUM

Free the first Friday of every month for all visitors, sponsored by Meijer.

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Free on Mondays from 9:00 a.m. to Noon for Milwaukee County residents. Excludes major holidays.












524 S. Layton Blvd., Milwaukee  
(414) 257-5611  
[www.milwaukeedomes.org](http://www.milwaukeedomes.org)



2017 Free Days: 1/7, 2/4, 3/4, 10/7, 11/4, 12/2, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day & New Year's Day.

10001 W. Bluemound Rd., Milwaukee  
(414) 256-5412  
[www.milwaukeezoo.org](http://www.milwaukeezoo.org)

# 2017 BUDGET UPDATE

BUDGET AND POLICY ISSUES		County Executive (CEX) Abele 2017 RECOMMENDED BUDGET	County Board of Supervisors 2017 ADOPTED BUDGET	Chairman Lipscomb BUDGET AMENDMENTS & VOTES
	PARKS	Eliminated funding for the Park Amenities Matching fund (PAMF), a fund to help generate additional private resources for maintenance and repairs in our Parks.	Amended to allocate net parking revenue from O'Donnell Park to the PAMF, which is expected to be \$250,000 in 2017 and would provide \$500,000 for investments in parks projects.	Voted in favor of the amendment.
	BROWN DEER PARK	Prior to budget, initiated a project to expand the Brown Deer Park driving range and permanently cut off a segment of the circle drive.	Amended to allocate funds to reconstruct and reconfigure a portion of the deteriorated circle drive in order to maintain the parkway's closed loop and accommodate future driving range enhancements.	Co-authored the amendment.
	MILWAUKEE BUCKS ARENA	Unilaterally committed \$4 million a year over 20 years of taxpayer revenue to fund the Bucks Arena for a total payment of \$80 million.	Amended to reestablished an account to transparently reflect the public's forced tax contribution to the arena.	Voted in favor of the amendment.
	OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE	Increased the budget of the Office of the County Executive by \$188,150 since 2011, after pledging to freeze expenditures when first elected.	Amended to reduce the Executive's budget by \$188,150 to hold County Executive Abele accountable to his pledge.	Authored the amendment. The amendment was vetoed by Executive Abele, and overridden on a vote of 12 to 5.
	MINIMUM WAGE	Proposed a \$15 minimum wage for County employees and those who contract with Milwaukee County.	Proposed a similar Living Wage Ordinance of \$15 an hour, which is phased in over 5 years.	Voted in favor of the Ordinance.
	COUNTY EMPLOYEES (WAGES & BENEFITS)	1) Cut the employee Flexible Spending Account (FSA) matching contribution in half from \$2000 to \$1000. 2) Increased healthcare premiums.	1) Amended to restore \$500 to FSA matching contribution, bringing it to \$1500. 2) Eliminated a \$2 million undefined proposal by the Executive for bonuses and wage increases.	Authored the amendment.
	WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT	Allocated \$500,000 to Employ Milwaukee to expand the efforts of Chairman Lipscomb's Ready to Work Initiative.	Left the measure unchanged. Ready to Work is a jobs training program that has trained and placed over 500 people in jobs with an average hourly wage of \$15.	Created the original program and supports the expansion.
	TRANSIT	Allocate approximately \$7.8 million in wheel tax revenue for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), which will connect downtown Milwaukee to the Regional Medical Center and the County Research Park.	Amended to reduce wheel tax revenue as a funding source for BRT by \$5.8 million. The BRT project requires a multi-year investment and will proceed subject to federal funding in 2017 and 2018.	Authored the amendment.
	GO PASS	1) Proposed a new \$5 fee to issue the GO Pass, as well as new income requirements to qualify for the pass. 2) Added a fare of \$0.25 per ride for GO Pass users.	1) Kept the income requirements and \$5 issuance fee, and added a 3 year renewal for the pass. 2) Amended to adjust the fare to \$1 for a day-pass for GO Pass users.	Voted against this amendment.
	WHEEL TAX	Proposed a new \$60 Vehicle Registration Fee (VRF or "wheel tax") for Milwaukee County residents.	Amended the budget to reduce this fee by half to \$30 and cut spending by more than \$14 million.	Voted against CEX Abele's \$60 wheel tax. Authored the amendment to cut VRF in half and reduce spending in 2016.
	WHEEL TAX REFERENDUM	No Proposal to let Milwaukee County residents have their voices heard on the wheel tax.	Authorized an advisory referendum on Abele's \$60 wheel tax proposal for the Spring 2017 general election.	Authored the amendment to ensure the public has their voice on record for future budgets.